

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 WELLIN 03597 130645Z  
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SOE-02 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00  
COME-00 DODE-00 EB-08 DOE-15 H-02 INR-10 INT-05  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-05 ICA-20 OES-09  
SP-02 SS-15 STR-07 TRSE-00 ACDA-12 /140 W  
-----121070 141348Z /44

R 122127Z JUL 78  
FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5876  
INFO AMEMBASSY SUVA  
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

UNCLAS WELLINGTON 03597

E.O.11652:N/A  
TAGS: ENRG, TN, NZ  
SUBJECT: TONGAN OIL PROSPECTS

REF: (A) CANBERRA A-114, (B) WELLINGTON 2082

1. REF A. REPORTS REGIONAL RESOURCES ATTACHE'S (RRA) LACK OF SUCCESS IN ELICITING INFORMATION ON THE RESULTS OF THE INITIAL OIL DRILLING VENTURE INITIATED BY WEBB RESOURCES IN TONGA IN EARLY MARCH. IN HIS MESSAGE RRA SURMISES THAT FOR SOME REASON WEBB IS KEEPING THE RESULTS OF ITS DRILLING SECRET.

2. IN ACTUAL FACT THE PROGRESS OF WEBB'S OPERATIONS HAS BEEN REASONABLY WELL KNOWN, HAVING BEEN REPORTED ON REGULARLY IN THE PAST BY AMEMBASSY SUVA AND PRESENTLY BY AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON. REF. B. SENT TO ALL ADDRESSES GIVES OUR LATEST ANALYSIS, RESULTING FROM AMBASSADOR'S LAST VISIT TO TONGA.

3. SUBSEQUENT DEVELOPMENTS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

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(A) DRILLING BEGAN ON THE KUMIMONU NO. 2 WELL AT FUA'AMOTU, REFERRED TO IN REF A. ON APRIL 17, BUT THE DRILLING SITE WAS DECLARED DRY ON MAY 11. DRILLING CEASED AT 6,984 FEET, THE LAST 100 FEET BEING THROUGH BASE ROCK. THERE WAS NO INDICATION OF THE PRESENCE OF A LIMESTONE REEF, THE FORMATION IN WHICH THE OIL IS BELIEVED TO BE CONTAINED.

(B) THE THIRD WELL OF WEBB'S PROGRAM IN THE TOWN OF NUKU'ALOFA (KUMINOU NO. 3), ALSO MENTIONED REF.A., BEGAN ON MAY 26 AND ACCORDING TO THE LATEST INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO US HAS REACHED A DEPTH OF 8,100 FEET WITH NO INDICATION THUS FAR OF OIL OR GAS DEPOSITS.

IF KUMIMONU 3 TURNS OUT TO BE A DRY WELL, AS IS LIKELY, DRILLING OPERATIONS WILL PROBABLY CEASE TEMPORARILY WHILE AVAILABLE DATA IS EVALUATED, A PROCESS WHICH SHOULD TAKE SEVERAL MONTHS. ALTHOUGH IT NOW SEEMS LIKELY THAT ALL THREE SITES WILL BE DRY, WEBB TONGA STILL MAINTAINS A GLIMMER OF HOPE AND HAS STATED ITS INTENTION AT THE MOMENT TO CONTINUE ITS EXPLORATION PROGRAM.

4. EMBASSY COMMENT:

WE HAD BEEN WAITING UNTIL A FINAL EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAM WAS FORTHCOMING BEFORE REPORTING, BUT FELT THIS MESSAGE NECESSARY GIVEN INDEPENDENT SUBMISSION OF REF. A. REF. A. ALSO RAISES THE QUESTION OF PROPER COORDINATION BETWEEN THE RRA AND EMBASSIES HAVING RESPONSIBILITIES IN COUNTRIES ON WHICH RRA IS REPORTING. BETTER COORDINATION WOULD BE PARTICULARLY USEFUL WHEN, AS IN THIS CASE, THE EMBASSY CONCERNED MAY BE ABLE TO BE OF DIRECT ASSISTANCE WITH DATA. DEPARTMENT'S AND RRA'S COMMENTS WOULD BE APPRECIATED. SELDEN

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## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** EXPLORATION, PETROLEUM PRODUCTS, PROGRESS REPORTS  
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**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 12 jul 1978  
**Decapton Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decapton Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** n/a  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:**  
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**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
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**Errors:** N/A  
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**Subject:** TONGAN OIL PROSPECTS  
**TAGS:** ENRG, TN, NZ  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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